

Secondly, I believe that thanks to you, all of you, that wherever I go the most important thing is to get the message out, get the message to the American people that we have made a good beginning in these last 21 months, that we are dealing with problems that accumulated for years before I took office, that I don't pretend that we have solved all the problems. I know there are still things to do, but we ought to keep going forward, not turn back. That message goes across America no matter where I am.

#### **Michael and Alexander Smith**

**Q.** Mr. President, the Nation has been stunned by the news of the deaths of these two children in South Carolina. Do you have any reflections on that this morning?

**The President.** Well, I think like every American, especially every parent, I have followed this gripping incident, and it's been a heartbreaking thing. I think today what I would like to do is to say a word of encouragement to the people of Union, the people of the community, beginning with the sheriff and all the law enforcement officials, all the children who prayed, all the people who worked to try to recover those children.

It is very important that they not, in any way, feel that their efforts are diminished. The American people looked on them with enormous admiration, the way they pulled together across racial and other lines, the way they tried to find those children, the way they worked to get to an answer, the way they prayed for the safety of the children. I just don't want them to believe that somehow what the mother did in any way diminishes the quality, the character, the courage of what they did.

And so my thoughts and prayers are with them today. And I would hope the American people would feel that way as well. I think we were all moved and deeply impressed by how that community responded, and this awful turn of events cannot undermine that.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 a.m. at the Holiday Inn. In his remarks, he referred to Haley Barbour, Republican National Committee chairman.

#### **Interview With Jim Dunbar of KGO Radio, San Francisco, California**

*November 4, 1994*

**Jim Dunbar.** Good morning, Mr. President.

**The President.** How are you?

#### **Health Care Reform**

**Mr. Dunbar.** I'm Jim Dunbar, and I'm just fine. And it's a privilege having the opportunity to talk to you. I've got a couple of questions that I hope you haven't heard thus far this morning.

Yesterday it was announced that the First Lady was stepping aside as the administration's main point person on health care reform. Sir, is this a concession on your part that maybe she was just a little too visible in her efforts to get the health care package through Congress?

**The President.** No. I don't think that's right at all. What happened, I think—keep in mind, we took this health care debate further than it had ever been taken in American history. For 60 years, Presidents have tried to solve the health care problem, to secure the health insurance of people who had it, and to cover—help people who didn't and to bring costs in line. And for 60 years, they failed because of the power of the organized health care interests. This is the first time we ever got a bill to both Houses of the Congress. We could have passed the bill this year if the Republicans had been willing to work with us in a bipartisan manner. But they abandoned their commitment to health care reform and decided to play politics with it instead.

**Mr. Dunbar.** Are you going to let it rest for awhile, or are you going to go right back at it?

**The President.** No, we're going to try to—what I have to do now is to figure out how we can go at it in a way that will make our plan less vulnerable to the \$200 million or so that was spent to characterize it as a big Government plan that reduces choices for people who have health insurance. The truth is, our plan lets you keep what you have. It relies on private insurance, not the Government, and it protects people from losing their insurance. It covers people who don't. And

then it gives small business people and farmers and individual people the opportunity to buy health care on the same basis as people who are in big businesses or Government. That's what we need to do.

And I just need to go back at it in a way that is less vulnerable to the interest groups attacking it. But let me say, it's come out just since we stopped our health care efforts, because we couldn't pass it through Congress, another million Americans in working families lost their health insurance last year. We are the only advanced country in the world, the only one, where people under the age of 65 are losing ground in health care coverage, where every year a lot of folks are paying more and more for less coverage, every year more and more people are losing their coverage. And we're also spending more for health care by far than anybody else. The money is going primarily to people in the middle, to clerical costs and insurance companies and what the doctors and hospitals and the others have to spend to keep up with the mindless paperwork of the way we finance the health care system.

So we can't walk away from it. It's killing the budget. It's bad for the economy. It's hurting working people. We're going to have to face up to it. I just have to find a way to do it that makes it less vulnerable to the insurance company attack that it's a big Government plan.

### **Midterm Elections**

**Q.** Mr. President, I only have 5 minutes here, and I do have a couple more questions. You hear a charge in California—we know you're heading here and going to be here over the weekend, and we're glad to have you—but you hear a charge that Michael Huffington is buying his way into the Senate. But I point out that Dianne Feinstein, Senator Feinstein, has spent about \$15 million in her efforts to keep that seat. And both would argue that they're doing it because the other fellow is. Is there some way we could put a cap on that so that being elected to Congress doesn't come down to the guy with the most money?

**The President.** Well, I certainly think we should. But to be fair, Senator Feinstein's had to raise a lot of money because Mr. Huff-

ington said he'd spend however much of his personal fortune he had to to buy the seat. And the really terrifying thing is that since people are awash in information these negative ads have an incredibly disproportionate influence over what they should. And people have no way of knowing whether the information's even true or not. So it's a terrible, terrible thing.

I tried to pass a campaign finance reform bill through Congress, and the Republican Senators killed it at the end of the last legislation session. We could have had campaign finance reform, but they had the power to filibuster it, delay it, and kill it. And they did.

The Supreme Court has said that we cannot legally stop a wealthy person from spending all the money that he or she wants on a campaign. So the only way to discourage a wealthy person from doing that is to put limits on spending and then say if you go over these limits, we're going to set aside a fund, and your opponent gets a dollar for every dollar you spend over it. That would remove the incentive to do that and encourage people to be more efficient and to spend more time answering questions and being more positive.

I mean, these campaigns have just turned into nothing more than multimillion dollar negative-ad slugfests, and they don't have—very often they don't have a lot to do with what is going to happen the day after the election. I mean, I think the best case for Feinstein, for example, is that as far as I know, she is the only Senator in my lifetime who in only 2 years in the Senate, her first 2 years in the Senate, has sponsored three major legislative initiatives, the assault weapons ban, the requirement that there be a zero tolerance for kids having guns in schools, and the California desert bill, the biggest wilderness preserve in the history of the country. I know of no Senator in my lifetime who's done that. Now that, it seems to me, ought to be an argument for giving her a 6-year term. She did something in 2 years nobody else has ever done, and she ought to get 6 to keep on helping California.

So to me—I would like to see these races be more positive, talk about what ideas people have to build the future and help people and empower people to take responsibility

for their lives. That seems to me to be what we ought to be talking about.

**Q.** Mr. President, unfortunately our time is up. We started our egg timer here 5 minutes ago, and it just went bing. And I agreed with your folks to let you go.

You are welcome any time you've got a little time to devote to answering questions. You're welcome any time on KGO. Thanks so much.

**The President.** I'd love to do that. I'll be at the Kaiser Center in Oakland tomorrow at 2 p.m., and I hope some of your listeners will come out and see me.

**Mr. Dunbar.** We sure will. Thank you very much, sir.

**The President.** Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 10:35 a.m. The President spoke by telephone from the Holiday Inn in Duluth, MN. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

### Interview With Ken Minyard and Roger Barkley of KABC Radio, Los Angeles, California

November 4, 1994

**Q.** And now, ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States of America, President Bill Clinton. We wanted to make—you're probably very happy today, Mr. President, given the unemployment figures, and we thought bringing you on in this style would be appropriate.

**The President.** Well, thank you very much.

**Q.** You recognize that music, of course?

**The President.** I do. That's what I played on "Arsenio."

**Q.** That's right. That's right.

**The President.** Now, I'm supposed to say, "Great show," aren't I?

**Q.** Oh, yes. Let's start from the beginning. Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States.

**The President.** Great show, Ken and Barkley.

**Q.** Oh, thank you very much.

**The President.** I've got my lines down.

**Q.** You did it fine.

**The President.** You play my music; I do your lines. It's great.

**Q.** Yes, thank you very much. Mr. President, it's a pleasure certainly for us to be able to visit with you here. We were actually broadcasting this program from your Inauguration on the morning of January 20, 1991. We were in the big scaffolding thing that was set up alongside the Capitol building where all the photographers and other broadcasters were. And you waved at us, I think. That was a very nice thing.

**The President.** 1993. Yes, that was great.

**Q.** '93. Yes, '93. Excuse me, '91. 1993. Now, would you say as you look back on it, nearly 2 years after that day, that you maybe went into the office somewhat naive about the reality of being President of the United States?

**The President.** What do you mean by that?

**Q.** Well, that the magnificence of that moment and the anticipation of the 4 years to follow and, perhaps, 8, how tough it was going to be. And then suddenly the reality sets in that you're dealing with Haiti and the Middle East and all the things that have—

**The President.** I think to some—I think I underestimated a couple of things. First of all, the difficulty of having to manage both a domestic and a foreign policy at the same time when both needed so much change, because we need to be strong at home and strong abroad and fighting for good jobs and strong families and safe streets at home and fighting for greater security and freedom and democracy abroad, that's something I underestimated.

The other thing I underestimated was the extreme partisanship of the Republican congressional leadership which we now know from studies is the worst it's been since World War II. No President ever had to deal with that.

Now, notwithstanding that, after the Congress went home, we learned that this was only the third time since World War II when the Congress supported the President more than 80 percent of the time. And so we were able to have a historic reduction in the deficit and to provide a dramatic increase in college loans for middle class people and pass the family leave law and the Brady bill and a dramatic crime bill and immunize the kids in the country who are under 2 by 1996. We